

Compare roles in health

Not sure where to start with the hundreds of NHS careers? Use our compare roles section to get bite-size information on the entry requirements and training, pay and conditions, prospects and skills needed of up to three roles. If there is something that you think you could do, then get more in-depth information on the role.

Don't forget, you can also save your role comparisons by registering with us.

- **Dental nurse** ^[1]

A dental nurse supports the dentist in all aspects of patients' dental care.

Training and qualifications required

To work as a dental nurse, you have to be registered with the General Dental Council (GDC) or be enrolled on a GDC-approved certificate, diploma or degree course. You do not necessarily need academic qualifications to work as a trainee dental nurse but you will need to study for qualifications to progress.

Expected working hours and salary range

Most dental nurses in the NHS work standard hours, which are likely to be around 37.5 a week. They may work some evenings. Your starting salary will usually be between band 3 and band 4 of the Agenda for Change pay rates but some senior dental nurses will start at band 5 or higher. Terms and conditions may vary for those dental nurses not directly employed by the NHS.

Desirable skills and values

Being a dental nurse requires a friendly, responsible attitude, a positive approach to people and a willingness to study. You must be happy to work as part of a team and willing to learn and understand the science behind dentistry.

Prospects

Experience as a dental nurse is usually a requirement for those wishing to become a dental hygienist or dental therapist. With experience and further training, dental nurses can also work as orthodontic therapists.

Related roles

- Dental support worker ^[2]
- Receptionist ^[3]

- Dental therapist ^[4]
- Dental hygienist ^[5]

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